



## A Message from the Saint Louis Zoo

# We are dedicated to caring for animals

It's our simple, yet powerful, promise: we are dedicated to providing the highest standard of care to animals. Everything we do at the Saint Louis Zoo, from hosting educational programs and events to promoting Zoo memberships, helps us keep our promise strong.

Providing quality animal care is a big job. All of our animals have individual needs. We provide state-of-the-art habitats, nutritious diets, the best veterinary care and training, and stimulating enrichment to over 17,000 animals. And come rain or shine, in the heat or in the cold, our staff is here 365 days a year to ensure the animals are healthy and thriving.

As you read this report and reflect on our accomplishments from 2017, we hope our dedication to animal care shines through. I also invite you to give yourself a pat on the back. Because of you—our Zoo community—we're able to provide outstanding care for animals here and around the world as well as the best experience for our visitors. Thank you for your commitment to our success.

I hope you enjoy this report, and we'll see you at the Zoo soon.



Animal care staff tend to (from top to bottom): a kinkajou, a Speke's gazelle and California sea lions.

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Siblings Huckleberry and Finley enjoy their new habitat.



Visitors interact with a grizzly bear at Centene Grizzly Ridge.

## A History of Bear Care

Centene Grizzly Ridge opened to the public on Friday, September 15, 2017. Its first residents are 3-year-old siblings Huckleberry (Huck) and Finley.

Grizzly Ridge is the perfect combination of old and new. It is located on the site of the Zoo's historic Bear Bluffs habitat. Bear Bluffs was cutting edge when it was built in the early 1920s; the Saint Louis Zoo was one of the first zoos to replace barred cages with open, moated and naturalistic habitats. Grizzly Ridge retains three-fifths of the original rockwork from Bear Bluffs, carrying an important part of the Zoo's past into the future.

The new Grizzly Ridge habitat is much more naturalistic for the bears. It was designed with pools and streams, river bluffs, evergreens, and fallen logs. Grizzly Ridge also provides for today's modern standard of animal care. Animal care staff does more training today than what was done in the days of Bear Bluffs, so Grizzly Ridge incorporates ways keepers and veterinarians could have safe access to the animals. Keepers train the grizzly bears to do husbandry behaviors, like opening their mouth or presenting

different body parts for examination, so the bears can participate in their own health care.

In addition to an improved habitat for the bears, Grizzly Ridge offers a strong educational experience for visitors. The primary message of the exhibit is that people and bears can live peacefully together. Grizzly bears are listed as a threatened species primarily due to human development and conflict. At Grizzly Ridge, keepers, interpreters and docents let visitors know that humans and bears can live safely together.

Grizzly Ridge was the culminating project of *The Living Promise Campaign*, which concluded in 2014. Campaign donors provided more than \$134 million to help the Zoo with several projects and goals, including building dynamic, new animal exhibits.

Grizzly Ridge wouldn't have been possible without our many donors, including Centene Charitable Foundation, The Bellwether Foundation, the Beckmann Family Charitable Trust and the Hermann Family Foundation. Thanks to the generosity of our donors, Huck and Finley are sure to enjoy their new habitat for many years to come.

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## America's "Best Zoo"

A big honor for us in 2017 was being voted "Best Zoo" in the country by the 10Best Readers' Choice Awards contest sponsored by USA Today. We were thrilled; in 2016, we were named "America's Top Free Attraction" by voters of the same program. We are very proud—I don't think many institutions can claim being voted the best in the country in addition to not charging admission! Everyone at the Zoo is extremely grateful for the community's support with these accolades.

## Zoo Baby Boom

We welcomed more than 1,116 baby animals at the Saint Louis Zoo in 2017.

One of the most significant births of the year was the arrival of a male black rhinoceros calf on May 17, 2017.

Moyo, our new black rhino



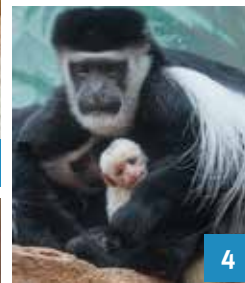
Caretakers named him Moyo, which means "heart" in Swahili. Moyo is the second black rhino to be born at the Zoo in 26 years and only the tenth in Zoo history. This birth represents success not only for the species, which is in decline, but also for our Zoo.

Another momentous birth for our Zoo, and for the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) community, was the arrival of eight cheetah cubs on November 26, 2017. The cubs, three males and five females, were born at the Saint Louis Zoo River's Edge Cheetah Breeding Center. In over 430 litters documented by the AZA, this is the first time a female cheetah has produced and reared on her own a litter of eight cubs at a zoo. The average litter size is three to four cubs.



Eight cheetah cubs are well cared for by mom Bingwa.

Other species that had babies born last year included: okapi<sup>1</sup>, Hercules beetle<sup>2</sup>, Victoria crowned pigeon<sup>3</sup>, colobus monkey<sup>4</sup>, East African crowned crane<sup>5</sup>, lesser kudu<sup>6</sup>, Addra gazelle<sup>7</sup>, Ozark hellbender<sup>8</sup> and Grevy's zebra<sup>9</sup>.



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## Fence to Field

The Saint Louis Zoo cares about our animals here and their wild counterparts around the world. Here are just a few of our many conservation success stories from 2017.

### Mexican Wolf Pup Born from Artificially Inseminated Frozen Semen

For the first time ever, on April 2, 2017, an endangered Mexican wolf was born using thawed, frozen semen for artificial insemination.



Mexican wolf pup held by caretaker.

This pup was born at the Endangered Wolf Center near St. Louis using sperm that was collected by Zoo staff and was stored at our cryopreservation gene bank. This “frozen zoo” semen bank holds the frozen sperm of endangered animals and may help prevent their extinction.



### “Invest in the Nest” Kickstarter Campaign

In the summer of 2017, we were one of 70 AZA institutions that teamed up on the “Invest in the Nest” Kickstarter campaign, which raised money to help penguins in the wild. African penguin populations

are declining because they don’t have a suitable place to build nests and hatch babies. These penguins build their nests out of guano (feces), but it is often over-harvested and sold as fertilizer. We helped raise funds for this campaign by offering special keeper chats and sharing the campaign message through e-cards and social media. Thanks to the support of donors across the country, \$150,000 was raised to help give these penguins a new home.

### Zoo Joins Forces with St. Louis Institutions on Living Earth Collaborative

Many plant and animal species are on the verge of extinction. To help address this problem, we’ve joined forces with Washington University in St. Louis and the Missouri Botanical Garden on the newly created Living Earth Collaborative. This program will create a new academic center dedicated to advancing the study of biodiversity to help ensure the future of Earth’s species. The Living Earth Collaborative will be headquartered at Washington University and led by Dr. Jonathan Losos.

### Partula Snail Reintroduction in Tahiti

In October 2017, the Zoo had a part in helping reintroduce 1,775 Partula snails back to their native habitat in Tahiti. The Zoo has been involved with the raising of Partula snails since the 1980s. As with many animals listed as critically endangered, the Partula snail is part of a Species Survival Plan (SSP).



Partula snails marked for release.

Approximately 15 zoological institutions participate in the SSP of the Partula snail. This was the third year the Zoo has contributed to reintroducing Partula snails into the wild.

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## 2017 Saint Louis Zoo Highlights

### Zoo Offers Visitors Free Wi-Fi

On Memorial Day weekend in 2017, the Zoo launched its free public Wi-Fi powered by Mid America Chevy Dealers. The Zoo celebrated its new Wi-Fi accessibility with an Instagram contest to Zoo visitors, encouraging them to submit their best “fan photo.” From the submitted photos, a winner was selected each week. The Zoo received over 3,000 photo entries and boosted its social media fandom to new heights!



Interpreter answers questions about animals.

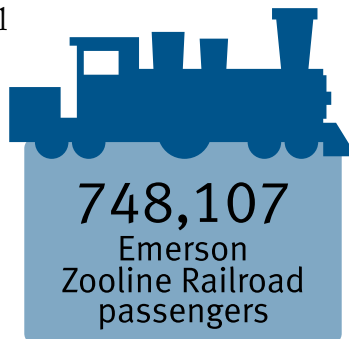
### New Member Benefit – Wild Wednesdays

Zoo members enjoyed an added member benefit called “Wild Wednesdays.” Each Wild

Wednesday had an hour-long, interpreter-led tour of specific areas of the Zoo. Tours covered a variety of topics, including animal enrichment, reproductive science and animal nutrition.

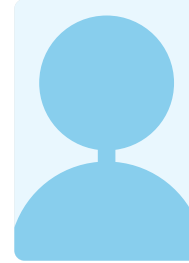
### #byetobags Celebrates One Year

The #byetobags campaign celebrated its one-year anniversary on April 23, 2017. The campaign encourages the public to take a pledge to switch from plastic bags to eco-friendly bags. People can take the pledge on Zoo grounds or via social media. The campaign is spearheaded by the Zoo ALIVE teen volunteers, who share the importance of ocean conservation and let people know that even in the Midwest, our actions impact ocean animals. Since its launch, the #byetobags campaign has garnered nearly 6,000 pledges.



### Zoo Debuts New TV Commercial

In June 2017, we debuted a new television commercial that showed how committed we are to caring for our animals. It features many of our staff members who care for the animals. Mirroring our television commercial was a series of billboards that featured some of the staff members in the commercial.



53,899  
Zoo  
memberships



Billboards that accompanied the TV commercial were seen around St. Louis.

### Mary Ann Lee Conservation Carousel Celebrates its 5 Millionth Rider

In December 2017, the Zoo celebrated hosting its 5 millionth rider on the Mary Ann Lee Conservation Carousel since the custom-designed attraction debuted in May 2003. All proceeds from this attraction help support our WildCare Institute conservation programs. To date, the Conservation Carousel has raised more than \$7.1 million for wildlife conservation.

Mary Ann Lee was a St. Louis philanthropist and generous Zoo supporter who passed away on April 17, 2017. Mary Ann Lee provided a significant financial contribution that made the carousel possible. In addition, a number of local businesses and families provided gifts.

# A Message from the Saint Louis Zoo



Striped windows at the Orthwein Animal Nutrition Center help prevent bird strikes.

## Zoo Prevents Bird Strikes Around Campus

We care for all animals, even those outside our collection. A big problem birds face is accidental window strikes. Reflections in windows can be confusing to birds, causing them to crash. To remedy this problem around the Zoo's campus, our staff crafted vertical and horizontal stripe applications, which were placed on windows of the August A. Busch Jr. Administration Building, Cafe Kudu and the William R. Orthwein, Jr. & Laura Rand Orthwein Animal Nutrition Center. These stripes help the birds see and avoid the windows. The stripes have helped prevent accidental bird strikes significantly (88 percent efficiency), and we continue to monitor the windows to help keep birds safe.

## Endowment Grows To \$70 Million

The Zoo's Endowment Fund is the lifeblood of many of our programs, from operations, camp and preschool

scholarships, animal care, landscaping, visitor amenities, volunteers, and staff. The Endowment Fund reached \$70 million at the end of 2017. Many donors have provided support throughout the years. A significant legacy gift came from Mary Ann Lee and established the Mary Ann Lee Facilities Fund. This fund will aid in caring for and maintaining the many facilities that she helped us build in her lifetime.

## Zoo Offers More Services to Visitors with Disabilities

We want people of all abilities to enjoy programs at the Zoo, and we added two new offerings: Sensory Saturdays and Sensory Night at U.S. Bank Wild Lights. Sensory Saturdays, held in the Wild Wonder Outpost on the second Saturday of the month, invite children with sensory or special needs and their families to enjoy sessions designed specifically for them. The new Sensory Saturday sessions are modified with dimmer lighting, reduced sound and a sensory-break area with fidgets (self-regulation tools to help with focus, attention, calming and active listening), pillows and other accommodations. Similar to this program, we offered a sensory-friendly



Child plays in the Wild Wonder Outpost.

448  
Heritage  
Society  
members

1,168  
Marlin Perkins Society  
members with gifts  
totaling \$2,243,558

Animal Health  
staff saw nearly  
10,000  
clinical cases

# A Message from the Saint Louis Zoo



Zoo educator shows a child how to touch an owl properly.

experience at Sensory Night at U.S. Bank Wild Lights on December 11, 2017. The night mirrored our traditional Wild Lights experience with holiday lights and music, but offered quiet areas and trained Zoo staff to assist families.

## Enabling Local Sales Tax Legislation Signed by Governor

On July 10, 2017, the governor signed legislation that allows the notion of a modest local sales tax to go on a ballot before St. Louis City and County voters; the tax, which would not exceed one-eighth of one percent, is proposed to help the Zoo with the expense of construction, operations and maintenance projects as well as conservation breeding.

This enabling legislation is an important step in helping us keep admission to the Saint Louis Zoo free for all, while helping us maintain our 100-year-old campus and expand our goals and conservation programs. With more than 3.2 million annual visitors to the Zoo, plus generating \$203.1 million in economic impact for the regional

2,033 volunteers worked 102,852 hours



economy (\$40.1 million just from tourism)\*, the Zoo is an essential asset to our community.

We have many new exhibits and amenities at the Zoo, thanks to the donors who made *The Living Promise Campaign* such a success, but the contrast with older areas of our campus is striking. Issues such as inadequate natural lighting for animals, rusty pipes, lack of access to outdoor habitats and the need for some retrofitted accessibility modifications highlight the

challenges we face in providing the best care for our animals and the best experience for our visitors, while remaining accessible to everyone in our community.

Each year the Zoo allocates funds in its budget to spend on capital projects. Despite spending over \$2 million each year on ongoing maintenance, the number and scope of projects consistently exceeds the amount we can spend. And while careful management has given the Zoo a strong financial foundation,

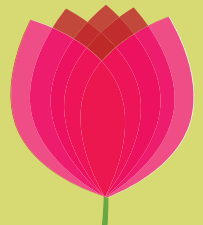
expenses have risen 36 percent since 2007 while property tax revenues remained relatively flat.

We're pleased the Missouri Legislature approved this measure and saw the importance of this enabling legislation for the future of the Zoo and our conservation work. We also thank the sponsors of this bill, Senator Gina Walsh and Representative Marsha Haefner.

With the support of our community, the Zoo can continue to provide the same world-class experience for generations to come.

\*St. Louis Regional Chamber, 2016

17,168 plants placed on Zoo property



# A Message from the Saint Louis Zoo



Zoo docents show animal biofacts to visitors.

## Thank you for your support

Because of your support, dedication and love for the Zoo, we are able to succeed in our quality work and achieve monumental outcomes. Our animals receive the highest quality care, we have beautiful landscaping and immersive exhibits, we offer thought-provoking education programs, and we host the best events in St. Louis. Our Zoo is all about community, and the work we do is truly a team effort. Your enthusiasm for this institution, each animal and every employee keeps us striving for the next milestone. We are thrilled that you are a member of the Zoo family.

Above all, I want to say thank you for keeping us America's Top Free Attraction and Best Zoo, and thank you for keeping us a beloved gem of St. Louis.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'J.P.B.', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Jeffrey P. Bonner, Ph.D.  
*Dana Brown President & CEO*